

# CloudCorp

Cloud County Development Corporation

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## Staff

Kirk G. Lowell  
Executive Director

Donna J. Barrett  
Administrative Assistant

January 24, 2007

Federal Communications Commission  
445 12th Street SW  
Washington, DC 20554

RE: CloudCorp Support of Twin Valley Telephone, Inc.

Dear Commissioners:

CloudCorp is a private sector, countywide, economic development organization. CloudCorp's basic mission is to facilitate, coordinate and communicate economic development opportunities to the citizens, existing businesses and new business prospects of Cloud County, Kansas. CloudCorp's mission is funded by annual fee-for-service agreements with Cloud County and the City of Concordia, plus private sector donations.

CloudCorp is very excited about the substantial capital investment Twin Valley Telephone, Inc. is making toward communication infrastructure enhancements in the North Central Kansas Region. Twin Valley's communication vision for Cloud County, implemented with advanced technology, has a multitude of economic and social benefits, both in the immediate and distant future. Twin Valley's investment provides area citizens and businesses access to advanced communication services such as high-speed Internet, video conferencing, telephone conferencing bridges, digital television services, etc.

For many of the rural communities in North Central Kansas these modern communication services were not available prior to Twin Valley acquiring the Sprint properties. Important to note, Sprint would likely to have never made advanced communication services available to rural communities in Cloud County because of Sprint's apparent corporate policy not to make high technology investments in rural Cloud County.

Although rural America offers a tremendous quality of life, our communities lack the career opportunities that attract our children to larger metropolitan communities. Twin Valley's investment makes available the high technology infrastructure that people and businesses require when selecting locations to expand. CloudCorp believes advance communication infrastructure will ultimately attract such businesses and help to increase our population.

Living in America's agricultural heartland, CloudCorp understands the dependency and importance of government support for high-cost-to-serve companies like Twin Valley. The support pool, known as Federal and Kansas Universal Service Funds (USF) is an excellent financial support system for telephone companies engaged in rural America. It appears that Sprint very much enjoyed substantial USF support while making virtually no high technology investments in Cloud County.

Twin Valley increased the communication technology investment in Cloud County from virtually nothing to millions of dollars. Now Twin Valley is being expected to operate on only one fourth of the USF support Sprint received for operating these same telephone exchange properties. This doesn't make sense and most certainly does not support or enhance rural people or rural businesses.

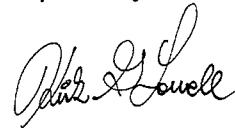
Twin Valley has increased the investment in rural communities to deploy advanced services and they are being expected to receive less USF support than Sprint received who made virtually little or no investment in our communities. CloudCorp believes it is logical and very appropriate that FCC approval be granted for Twin Valley Telephone, Inc. to receive the same USF support as Sprint received when operating the same exchanges while making very little new capital investment in our rural communities.

Twin Valley is a very positive, progressive and forward looking company that is helping to spark economic development and growth in Cloud County, Kansas. Twin Valley's advanced technology plans are an extremely important part of Cloud County's future as well is appropriate USF support of Twin Valley's business operations.

Please seriously consider prompt approval of USF support for Twin Valley telephone at the same funding level provided to Sprint when Sprint operated the very same exchanges with far less enthusiasm for our well being and economic future.

I welcome your call should you like to discuss this important issue in more detail.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Kirk G. Lowell".

Kirk G. Lowell  
Executive Director

Copy: Cloud County Board of County Commissioners  
CloudCorp Board of Directors

# CLAY COUNTY

MIKE SPICER  
JERRY MAYO  
DAVID THURLOW

P.O. BOX 98  
CLAY CENTER, KANSAS 67432  
(785) 632-5237 FAX (785) 632-5856



## OFFICE OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

January 22, 2007

Federal Communications Commission  
445 12<sup>th</sup> St. SW  
Washington, D.C. 20554

Re: Twin Valley Telephone

For many years, areas of Clay County have had telephone service provided to them by Sprint. Our residents, having Sprint service, knew they would never have high speed internet or other advanced telecommunications services available to them because of Sprint's philosophy of service in our area. The areas Sprint served were fairly low population density and more rural areas so they were sorely neglected in favor of more populous areas.

In 2006, Twin Valley Telephone of Miltonvale, Kansas purchased these exchanges from Sprint. Twin Valley is aggressively upgrading service to all these previously neglected areas. Our residents now will have the option of having high speed internet, cable TV, and other advanced phone services. Twin Valley has a long history of being a quality organization, providing quality service, by quality people.

The giant technological leap helps in making our smaller communities attractive places for people to live and work. As you may be aware, smaller communities in our area are in a constant struggle to remain viable. These services bring them up to par with other larger communities so their residents are able to enjoy the benefits of the telecommunications industry. In many cases the availability of high speed internet in our small communities has enabled people to move from the larger cities and work from their homes and live in our smaller communities.

We would ask the FCC act favorably on Twin Valley's request to be funded by the Universal Service Fund (USF) at a level equal to that of Sprint's for this area. Our residents pay into the fund, just as do residents in larger cities and deserve to reap the

"Providing dedicated, responsible and efficient service while promoting growth in Clay County with integrity and vision."

# CLAY COUNTY

MIKE SPICER  
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(785) 632-5237 FAX (785) 632-5856



## OFFICE OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

benefits of the fund also. We are confident Twin Valley will utilize the funds to provide our residents with the quality service they have long provided.

Thank you for your favorable consideration.

Board of Clay County Commissioner's

A cursive signature of Jerry Mayo, written in black ink, positioned above a horizontal line.

Jerry Mayo

A cursive signature of David M. Thurlow, written in black ink, positioned above a horizontal line.

David Thurlow

A cursive signature of Michael W. Spicer, written in black ink, positioned above a horizontal line.

Michael Spicer

"Providing dedicated, responsible and efficient service while promoting growth in Clay County with integrity and vision."

## **Minneapolis and Ottawa County Economic Development**

305 West 2<sup>nd</sup>

Minneapolis, KS 67467

(785) 392-3040

[cityminne@nckcn.com](mailto:cityminne@nckcn.com)

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Re: FCC meetings regarding Twin Valley Telephone

Dear FCC Committee,

This letter is in regards to Twin Valley Telephones request to receive the same apportionment that Sprint Corporation received thru the Federal and Kansas Universal Service Fund. In the case of Twin Valley I have seen the investments that they have made in these small rural communities. Large telecommunications companies will only invest in rural communities because agencies such as yourselves make it mandatory that they due so. Small rural telephone companies, such as Twin Valley and others like them make tremendous investments in infrastructure, as compared to the large telecommunications companies. My fear is that the FCC will be setting a precedent. Will this limit future investment by small rural telecommunications companies in rural America? I believe it would. Why would a small rural telephone want to invest in rural communities if the playing field is not even?

Also it seems to me that if the funding was adequate for another provider why wouldn't that funding be the same for the next provider. If that provider provides diminished services it would make sense. However, if the provider is offering more services and more investment (such as Twin Valley), the provider at a minimum should receive the same USF funds.

Without investment by local telecommunications companies, and small businesses would not be able to compete in rural America. Schools would not receive adequate connections to the Internet. Hospitals would not have the access they need. High speed, high quality Internet, and reliable telephone connections are a piece of our economy now just like the Interstate Highway system was in the past and is today. Without it and without significant investment we would fail.

I hope the commission will approve Twin Valley's request. And I also hope that in the future that other rural telecommunications companies will have the same approval.

If you would like to discuss this further please give me a call.

Best Regards,

Mark Freel  
Economic Development Director

## GALEN HAAS, MAYOR

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PO Box 100  
Clifton, KS 66937  
Phone: 785-455-3711  
Fax: 785-455-2272

January 24, 2007

Dear Twin Valley,

On behalf of the residents of Clifton and the surrounding area, I want to support you in your efforts to receive the support you are entitled from the USF.

We have appreciated the advancements you have provided to our community and anticipate the efforts you have made to make services available to our residents. Services such as high speed internet have never been available to us, we have had outdated phone equipment, and limited television options. We want to be able to offer up to date services to our residents and business, and hopefully interest new business, and opportunities for young families to stay in our town. I do appreciate the fact that you are a local business, that has provided jobs to many of our area residents. I feel you have a vested interest in this area and the people. We certainly did not see any benefit from support Sprint received from the USF.

I believe the USF would have more reason to grant you this support then they did the previous carrier. If I can be of service in obtaining approval for you to receive this please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

  
Galen Haas, Mayor

January 22, 2007

Federal Communications Commission  
445 12<sup>th</sup> St. SW  
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear FCC Commissioners,

I am writing to you in regard to Twin Valley Telephone's application for a USF disbursement equal to that provided Sprint, the former utility for our exchanges. As a member of an affected household and a family business, and as economic development director for Clyde, a town of 700, I can tell you that Twin Valley Telephone's multi-million dollar investment in north central Kansas is one of the most important keys to our future.

In no way should TVT receive less than Sprint. They are doing *so much more* for our area.

In 1990, the Internet was growing in importance, yet our household was on a party line. As my neighbor complained to Sprint, "How are we supposed to get on the Information Highway when we can't even get on the phone?" We did eventually receive private lines, but other than service and maintenance, that was the extent of the benefits we received from Sprint investment.

In 2007, dial-up Internet service is limiting, almost a handicap. In the household, dial-up makes shopping slow and cumbersome, along with sharing family photos or downloading music. Several Clyde businesses must have high speed service. Those with dealerships now have downloads too large for dial-up. Several businesses do Web-based sales. A regional photographer needs to be able to send photo portfolios to her customers. Our schools would like to use Interactive TV to offer physics and stimulating electives for our bright young people.

Clyde can participate in regional or even worldwide services and trade if we have the technology, and TVT is delivering that technology – fiber-optic cable – to every home and business. As economic development director, I believe a lot of what will benefit our local economy will come from our own bright, creative people if they are not at a competitive disadvantage with telecommunications technology. Those who serve the agricultural community, and the sons, daughters, and spouses of our farmers are enterprising people and/or skilled professionals who can continue to live in this area and help support our communities if they can compete in this world.

In my mind, there is no doubt that Twin Valley Telephone's investment in this rural, sparsely populated area is greater than that of Sprint's, and they deserve the full USF disbursement that Sprint received ...or more.

Sincerely,

Mari Detrixhe  
Economic Development Director  
Clyde, Kansas

January 19, 2007

To the FCC:

I write to you in support of Twin Valley's efforts in receiving the support I believe they are entitled from the USF. Living in America's agricultural heartland, I understand the dependency and importance of government support for high-cost to serve companies like Twin Valley.

Twin Valley's investment in north-central Kansas provides hope for our communities. Their investment has a multitude of benefits, both in the immediate and distant future. Twin Valley's investment provides our residents access to advanced services such as High-Speed Internet and Television services. For many of Twin Valley's new constituents not only were these services not available prior to Twin Valley acquiring the properties, but they would likely never have been made available. I have been on Twin Valley services for many years and receive top high speed internet, telephone and HD television service. Twin Valley offers excellent service and will also to the newly acquired exchanges.

And as you likely know, populations in rural communities across the nation continue to decline. Although rural America offers a tremendous quality of life, our communities lack the career opportunities that attract our children to larger metropolitan communities. Twin Valley's investment makes available the infrastructure that businesses require when selecting locations to expand. I believe the infrastructure will ultimately attract such businesses and help to increase our population. Cloud County has opportunities of growth with a \$170 million ethanol plant and wind farms being built. I believe high speed communications that Twin Valley offers will be a real asset to the area.

Twin Valley, who is making millions of dollars worth of investments in rural America, is not asking for an increase in the support they receive. They're asking for the same support Sprint received, which would be a neutral effect to the support pool.

Twin Valley has increased the investment in rural communities to deploy advanced services and they are being expected to receive less support than Sprint received who made virtually little or no investment. I believe it is logical and appropriate that approval be granted to receive the same support as the previous carrier received.

Twin Valley is a forward looking company that is helping to spark economic development and growth in our communities. Their plans are an extremely important part of our future.

I welcome your call should you like to discuss this issue in more detail.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Bill Garrison".

Bill Garrison  
Cloud County Commission, Chairman  
785-427-3112





**719 Fifth Street Clay Center, KS 67432**  
**clayks@sbcglobal.net 785/632-5974 www.cckansas.org**

**January 19, 2007**

**The Federal Communications Commission  
445 Twelfth Street  
Washington, DC 29554**

**Dear Commissioners;**

**We are writing you in request of your consideration in a matter of up most importance to our area and to north-central Kansas.**

**As an introduction, Clay County is located in North Central Kansas close to the geographic center of the United States. The county's economic base, like most rural areas in our state is based on agriculture and manufacturing. Historically, again like most rural areas in our state and the mid-west, Clay County has battled against a steady decline in population. The county has maintained a high quality of life and in part in recent months, show indications of the potential for significant growth due to three primary factors: 1) military expansion at Fort Riley located approximately twenty miles from Clay County, 2) expansion of industries and services businesses mainly in Clay Center, the county seat of Clay County, and 3) an influx of retirees due to the areas high quality of life and its outstanding medical facilities and personnel.**

**Approximately a year ago, prospects for the future of our area received a tremendous boost when Twin Valley Telephone announced that they should build two new facilities in Clay Center. The first was a service center to be located in the Clay Center Industrial Park. In addition, Twin Valley also announced their intention to construct a beautiful new technical support center in downtown Clay Center. The two facilities involved a capital investment of \$12 million in our county and the creation of eighteen new jobs, creating a sizeable economic impact for this community.**

**Even more important, Twin Valley's creation of a state of the art high-speed internet and television communications system that will serve a large area of North Central Kansas promises to bring even greater benefits to our area and state. These services would likely never have been available had Twin Valley not acquired the properties.**

**For example, Clay County recently established a vocational learning center in Clay Center to initially provide health care training so that the need for nurses and other health care professionals can be met. Conversations have also been held relative to establishing an interactive network between rural health service providers, such as hospitals, and larger medical facilities to bring new procedures and services to rural areas. Twin Valley's participation through their system could be a major catalyst in development of this vital program.**

**The availability of a high-speed data transfer system will also be a tremendous asset to the manufacturing sector throughout our area and state. The State of Kansas has long recognized that the provision of this service is a vital component to the survival and future development of rural areas in our state.**

**North Center Kansas is currently being presented with the opportunity to establish an important link with a communications system of the future. We urge your support of Twin Valley Telephone' request for continuation of USF support at the level that Sprint received and believe by granting this support, our Nation and rural America will benefit.**

**Respectfully,**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "George McCune", written in a cursive style.

**George McCune  
Executive Director  
Clay County EDG**